



 ^{16th}
ICASA
ADDIS ABABA ETHIOPIA
4-8 December 2011

Own, Scale-up & Sustain

Welcome to Ethiopia!
Home to ICASA 2011



About ICASA

The International Conference on AIDS and Sexually Transmitted Infections in Africa (ICASA) is one of the major international AIDS conferences, which takes place in Africa biennially, alternating between Anglophone and Francophone countries. The 15th ICASA was held in 2008 in Dakar, Senegal and Ethiopia is honoured to host the 16th ICASA in Addis Ababa.

ICASA provides a forum for the exchange of scientific knowledge, experiences and best practices on HIV/AIDS and STIs in Africa and around the globe. Most importantly, ICASA serves as a platform for sharing the progress towards universal access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support on the continent, which is one of the milestones of the Millennium Development Goals (MDG 6).

This year's conference expects to welcome more than 10,000 delegates from around the world that are active in the fields of HIV/AIDS, STIs, TB and Malaria. It will also encourage the participation of young researchers, health care workers, and community representatives from the developing world by providing scholarships.

ICASA 2011

Ethiopia was selected to host the 16th International Conference on AIDS and STIs in Africa (ICASA) in 2011 by the Society for AIDS in Africa (SAA) based on the interest expressed by the Ethiopian government to host the conference, as well as the availability to provide adequate logistical support, including security, communication, accommodation and conference venue.

The conference will be held from 4-8 December 2011 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia at the Millennium Hall which can accommodate up to 35,000 people.



ICASA 2011 Objectives

- Serve as an advocacy platform to mobilize African leaders, partners and the communities to increase ownership, commitment and support for the response to HIV/AIDS/STIs, TB and Malaria.
- Provide a forum for exchange of knowledge, skills and consolidation of experiences and best practices in Africa and around the globe to scale up evidence-based response on HIV/AIDS/STIs, TB and Malaria to achieve the MDGs.
- Provide a forum to link and hold accountable political and national leaders, the scientific community, practitioners, communities, civil societies, the private sector and partners to scale-up and sustain the response to HIV/AIDS/STIs, TB and Malaria.
- Create opportunities to define priorities and set policy and program agenda to enhance mobilization and effective utilization of resources.

ICASA 2011 – Theme:

Own, Scale-up and Sustain

- **Owning** encompasses playing the lead role in HIV/AIDS and STI prevention, treatment, care and support at all levels including: policy, strategy, program implementation as well as monitoring and evaluation by all stakeholders.
- Once the response has been owned, it must then be **scaled up** nationally, regionally and globally in order to address the critical gaps that exist in enhancing prevention, care and support services.
- In the current global financial and economic climate, where HIV and AIDS programs are facing significant funding challenges, **sustaining** our collective efforts is critical in order to prevent reversing the tremendous gains Africa has made in recent years toward containing the pandemic and mitigating its impacts.





Key Dates

Call for Late Breaker Abstracts is open from 19 September 2011 – 17 October 2011. Please visit the ICASA website <http://icasa2011addis.org> for additional information on key dates and deadlines.

ICASA 2011 Significance

ICASA 2011 serves as a global platform to promote the efforts and achievements of African countries in combating HIV and AIDS. The conference will also provide an opportunity to further strengthen partnerships among governments, civil societies, communities, partner agencies and the global AIDS community.

Most significantly, the year 2011 marks:

- the 30th year after AIDS was first discovered as a new disease;
- 10 years after the United Nations General Assembly Special Session (UNGASS) Political Declaration on AIDS; and
- 5 years after the Global Declaration towards Universal Access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support.

In this respect, Ethiopia has a unique opportunity to provide a platform to review the collective progress made towards universal access, and attaining MDGs. The challenges facing the fight against the epidemic will also be shared.





ICASA 2011 Expectations

Ethiopia, as a host country of ICASA 2011, is responsible for the creation of a local environment conducive to supporting the success of the conference. Among other expectations, this includes availing an appropriate conference venue, adequate accommodation and transportation services, and ensuring the security and safety of participants.

Most importantly, Ethiopia intends to host a unique, professional and participatory conference that mobilizes the scientific community, international leaders, activists, higher learning institutions, civil societies and others to elevate the knowledge on HIV/AIDS, STIs, TB and Malaria to a higher level. Therefore, New and innovative research findings are expected to be shared during ICASA 2011.

While this Conference demands considerable financial and logistics mobilization and support, Ethiopia will undoubtedly host a successful event given the country's track record in hosting international conferences.





Welcome to Ethiopia!

Ethiopia occupies 1.1 million sq km (450,000 sq miles), and is situated in the Horn of Africa between 3 and 15 degrees North and 33 and 48 degrees East, bordered by Djibouti, Eritrea, Sudan, Kenya and Somalia. The country is divided into 9 Regional states and two City Administrations.

Ethiopia is truly a land of contrasts and extremes - a land of remote and wild places. Some of the highest and most stunning places on the African continent are found here, including the jaggedly carved Simien Mountains, one of UNESCO's World Heritage Sites - and some of the lowest, such as the hot but fascinating Danakil Depression, with its sulphur fumaroles and lunar-like landscape.

Naturally adorned with many deep and stupendous gorges, crowned by high and magnificent mountains, neck-laced by a chain of lakes, studded with burning deserts and great escarpments that plunge down from its highlands, Ethiopia remains a land of incomparable beauty. But it is not simply the sheer scale of its physical beauty which characterizes this land where the Blue Nile has carved one of the world's greatest and most awesome gorges. Its ancient and medieval monuments, its proud and colorful cultures, and its varied and often unique wildlife set it apart from all else.

Ethiopia, dissected through its middle by the scar of the Great Rift Valley, is as old as time itself. It is a land claiming a history that goes back to the Old Testament. It is the land of Sheba, and of Axum and Lalibela; of towering obelisks and the Ark of The Covenant - a land that was Christian before much of Europe and yet unknown to Europe for 1,000 years or more; a land that dwelt in limbo, forgotten by the world which it never forgot.

From the vast spread of Lake Tana, source of the Blue Nile River in the northern highlands, through the relics of Axum, seat of Sheba's legendary empire, down along the scorching inferno of the Danakil Depression, one of the world's lowest points, and high amid the wonders of the Simien and Bale Mountains to the untouched, game-filled wildernesses of the remote southern grasslands, Ethiopia is truly a tourist's paradise.

Ethiopian culture and tradition have been much influenced by both Christian and Muslim religions. Ethiopia is mentioned many times in the Bible and in the Qur'an. The Amharas and Tigreans are predominantly Christian and adhere to the Orthodox Church. The Oromos, the largest ethnic group, are more mixed, with Christian and Muslim communities, as well as communities who adhere to local traditions. The Ethiopian Orthodox Church is the largest religious group (45%), followed by Sunni Muslims (35%) and those with traditional beliefs (11%). An additional 9% are listed as 'others'. Catholicism and Ethiopian evangelism (Mekane Yesus) are also considered to be important religions in Ethiopia..

Ethiopia is old - old beyond all imaginations. As Abyssinia, its culture and traditions date back over 3,000 years. And far earlier than that lived "Lucy" or Dinkenes, meaning 'thou art wonderful', as she is known to the Ethiopians, whose remains were found in a corner of this country of mystery and contrasts.

Many people visit Ethiopia - or hope to do so one day - because of the remarkable manner in which ancient historical traditions have been preserved. And, indeed, the ceremonies and rituals of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church open a window on the authentic world of the Old Testament. In no other country is it possible to find yourself so dramatically transported back in time, or to participate with such freedom in the sacred rituals of an archaic faith.





Addis Ababa - the Capital

Addis Ababa, a cosmopolitan capital, is where the ICASA conference will take place. It is the capital and the largest city in Ethiopia. The seat of the Federal Government of Ethiopia, Addis Ababa lies on the central plateau at an altitude of 2,400 metres, 9 degrees north of the equator. Its average temperature is 16° C.

Established in 1887 by Emperor Menelik II, and aptly named ‘New Flower’ by his empress Taitu, Addis Ababa is host to the African Union (AU) and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA). Seven other international organisations have their headquarters and branch offices in the capital, which is also the centre of commerce and industry. Manufacturing plants for steel fabrication, wood, tanneries, textiles, cement, leather goods and breweries are among the activities located in and around Addis Ababa.

Modern Addis Ababa consists of three main areas. The eastern side has many government offices and educational centres and some of the most important buildings, such as the old Menelik Palace. The newer National or Jubilee Palace built in Emperor Haileselassie’s early days stands lower down Menelik II Avenue opposite Africa Hall, the headquarters of the UNECA and where summit meetings of heads of the member states of the AU are held.

On this side of the city, visitors can find Maskal Square, which is used to hold mass demonstrations, as well as the renowned Addis Ababa University, which houses the National Museum and the Institute of Ethiopian Studies. One of Addis Ababa’s outstanding landmarks, the Trinity Cathedral, is also found here.





The central area of the city consists of the main commercial area, more government departments and City Hall. Other offices include the headquarters of Ethiopian Airlines, the main post and telegraph office, the general hospital and the Commercial Bank of Ethiopia. St. George's Orthodox Church, the National Theatre, the sports stadium and the Ras and Harambee hotels are also located in this area of the city.

The western sector of the city is home to Merkato market, which takes place seven days a week and is one of the largest and most colourful open-air markets in the world. Two significant mosques – the oldest and the largest in Addis, as well as the cross country bus station and lots of traditional handicraft shops are situated in this area.

Where To Stay

Addis Ababa has hotels that cater to every visitor's needs and budgets: from the luxurious Sheraton and Hilton hotels to hundreds of tourist-class hotels and cozy guest houses. Many of these hotels offer entertainment, tour operations, conference venues equipped with advanced audio-visual equipment, video editing suits, printing facilities, high speed internet connections (some with wireless), and catering services.

Restaurants

Addis Ababa boasts hundreds of excellent restaurants that serve both traditional and international cuisine in cozy and comfortable settings.





Getting There

Travelers can access Ethiopia by air or road. The best way to enter the country is to fly into Addis Ababa's Bole International Airport. The country is home to Ethiopian Airlines, one of the leading African airlines and a global player in aviation travel. Ethiopian Airlines provides flight service to Addis from 31 African cities as well as numerous locations around the world . Multiple airlines also operate regular flights in and out of Bole International Airport.

Visas are attainable at Ethiopian Missions/Consulates across the world while nationals of selected countries, are eligible for visas upon arrival. For specific visa requirements, please visit: <http://icasa2011addis.org>

Getting Around

Getting around Addis is also easy. A well established transportation network connects various locations within Addis as well as to all the regional capitals and other urban areas. Travelers can use the services of easily accessible taxis, minibuses, private car hires and/or rental cars.





HIV and AIDS in Ethiopia

As in many sub-Saharan African countries, HIV and AIDS remains one of the key challenges for the overall development of Ethiopia. The national HIV adult prevalence is estimated at 2.3% and approximately 1,116,216 people live with HIV and AIDS. The country faces a mixed epidemic where prevalence is low among the general population, but high among sub-populations and geographic areas. For more information, visit the Federal HIV and AIDS Prevention and Control Office website <http://www.hapco.gov.et>

Response

The Government of Ethiopia, in collaboration with all stakeholders, has established numerous structures to coordinate efforts to deal with the epidemic. These include a national HIV and AIDS Task Force within the Ministry of Health; the HIV and AIDS Prevention and Control Office (HAPCO) that is responsible for the leadership and coordination of the country's multi-sectoral response; and implementation of national strategic plans to enhance the country's response.

Ethiopia has also maintained strong partnerships with civil societies, networks of people living with HIV and AIDS, local NGOs, the private sector, and other partners to increase HIV awareness, enhance prevention, care and treatment efforts, and strengthen health and information systems.



ICASA 2011 - Contact Information

For more information or questions regarding ICASA 2011 conference:

ICASA website: <http://icasa2011addis.org>

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Email: coordinator@icasa2011addis.org, mediarelations@icasa2011addis.org

Useful Websites

HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control Office: <http://www.hapco.gov.et>

AIDS Resource Center: <http://www.etharc.org>

Society for AIDS in Africa: <http://saafrica.org>

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Ministry of Health

